

Message Text

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13-12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VIAHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0251

USMISSION NATO ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PO

SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF LABOR MOVES AGAINST ANOTHER COMMUNIST
UNION LEADERSHIP

REFS: (A) LISBON 0203 (DTG 121550Z JAN 76), (B) 75 LISBON

1324 (DTG 111602Z MAR 75) (NOTAL), (C) 75 LISBON 1672

(DTG 241753Z MAR 75) (NOTAL)

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SUMMARY: MINISTER OF LABOR TOMAS ROSA HAS ACTED TO REMOVE THE COMMUNIST (PCP) LEADERSHIP OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION. THIS IS SECOND RECENT INITIATIVE AGAINST PCP CONTROLLED UNIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. FOR THE SECOND TIME WITHIN TEN DAYS THE MINISTER OF LABOR, CAPTAIN TOMAS ROSA, HAS MOVED AGAINST COMMUNIST LEADERSHIPS WHICH HAVE RETAINED CONTROL OF UNIONS EITHER BY FORCE OR BY MANIPULATION. ON JANUARY 7 THE SOCIALIST-LED COALITION LEADERSHIP OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL WORKERS UNION WAS INSTALLED IN OFFICE, REPLACING A PCP FACTION WHICH HAD RETAINED CONTROL BY FORCE SINCE LAST JULY (REF A, PARA 7).

2. ON JANUARY 12 THE MINISTRY ANNOUNCED THAT LEGAL ACTION WAS UNDERWAY TO REMOVE THE (PCP) LEADERSHIP OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION. DURING MARCH 1975, WITH THE CONNIVANCE OF THEN MINISTER OF LABOR COSTA MARTINS, THE ANTI-INTERSINDICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS WAS REPLACED BY A PCP FACTION. FOLLOWING A SERIES OF GOVERNMENTAL MEASURES WHICH PRE-DETERMINED THE OUTCOME, ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN MARCH 1975, UNDER SUPERVISION OF MILITARY OFFICERS, TO RATIFY THE TAKE-OVER. MINISTER TOMAS ROSA IS NOW SEEKING TO INVALIDATE THESE ELECTIONS THROUGH COURT ACTION.

3. MAJOR POINTS OF THE COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCING THE MINISTRY'S ACTION ARE:

FORMER MINISTER OF LABOR COSTA MARTINS HAD ORDERED AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS (ANTI-INTERSINDICAL) LEADERSHIP, ALLEGING THAT IT HAD DESTROYED UNION ROLLS AND DIVERTED FUNDS TO POLITICAL PURPOSES. WHEN THE RESULTING INVESTIGATION SHOWED THESE CHARGES TO BE FALSE, THE MINISTRY DESTROYED THE REPORT. IT WAS ONLY BY POLICE INVESTIGATION THAT COPIES HAVE BEEN OBTAINED.

THE ACTION OF THE MINISTRY AT THAT TIME WAS UNJUSTIFIED INTERVENTION BY THE STATE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A DEMOCRATIC UNION, INCLUDING THE CALLING OF ELECTIONS BY MINISTERIAL DECREE AND THE IMPRISONMENT OF UNION LEADERS BY COPCON SECURITY FORCES. CURRENT MINISTER DOES NOT AGREE WITH LIBERAL DOCTRINE THAT

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MINISTRY HAS NO RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING UNION ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY WHERE IT AFFECTS DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES. IN TODAY'S SEMI-INSTITUTIONALIZED DEMOCRACY THE MINISTRY MUST TAKE, AT TIMES, A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRATIC UNIONISM.

THE MINISTRY RECOGNIZES THAT IT WAS AT THAT TIME RESPONSIBLE FOR MOBILIZING A MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE (ANTI-INTERSINDICAL) LEADERSHIP OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS, ACCUSING THEM OF LINKS

WITH CIA AND THE SPINOLIST COUP OF MARCH 11, AND THAT THIS HAD A DECISIVE EFFECT ON THE ELECTION OUTCOME. THIS COAPAIN ALSO SMEARED THE PEASANT-WORKER ALLIANCE (AOC), TO WHICH SOME OF THE UNION LEADERS BELOGNED. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR THEN OPPOSED THE EFFORTS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS BOARD TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF UNION LEADERS WHO WERE ALSO AOC OFFICIALS.

THIS COMMUNIQUE DEEPLY REGRETS THE INJUSTICES DONE TO THE UNION LEADERS WORKING FOR THE REBIRTH OF DEMOCRATIC UNIONISM IN PORTUGAL. IT ALSO RECOGNIZES ALL WHO STRUGGLED FOR TRADE UNION FREEDOM DURING THE TIME OF FASCISM, AND THOSE WHO TODAY STRUGGLE WITH THE SINCERE COOPERATION OF THE MINISTRY-TO MAKE THE UNION MOVEMENT A POWERFUL TOOL FOR THE ADVANCE OF DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL INDEPNEDENCE.

4. COMMENT: THIS ACTION IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ROSA'S EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE THE PCP'S PREDOMINANCE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT. THE LIKELY BENEFICIARIES OF THESE EFFORTS WILL BE THE SOCIALIST AOC COALITION EARLIER DISPLACED BY THE PCP.

5. THE AOC WAS ORGANIZED AS AN ELECTORAL FRONT BY THE PCP-ML, A MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZATION WITH SOME TIES TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE MINUSCULE PCP-ML IS CONSIDERED A RENEGADE GROUP

BY THE FAR LEFT AS IT COOPERATES WITH THE SOCIALISTS WHEN THIS BETTER ENABLES TI TO WORK AGAINST ITS PRINCIPLE ENEMY, THE PCP. ROSA HAS INDICATED TO THE LABATT THAT HE HAS A GOOD PERSONAL RELATIOSHIP WITH SEVERAL OF THE PCP-ML LEADERS AND BELIEVES THEY CAN SOMETIMES BE USEFUL. THIS PROBABLY EXPLAINS THE EULOGIZING TONE OF THE MINISTRY'S COMMUNIQUE.

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